



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NEWS
The Monthly Electronic Newsletter of
Homeland Security and Emergency Management
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Goffstown Fire Chief Richard O'Brien describing a white powder incident at Mountain View Middle School on March 6, 2012.

Department of Safety photo

SCHOOL EMERGENCIES DETAILED AT ADMINISTRATORS MEETING – A disaster or serious incident at a school is every superintendent's worst nightmare. But three New Hampshire school districts had to deal with them this year. Those incidents and emergency planning for schools were the subjects of a session at the 2012 Best Practices Conference on School Operations, Finance and Business Leadership in Concord on Sept. 24, sponsored by the N.H. School Administrators Association and the N.H. Association of School Business Officials. Fall Mountain School District Superintendent Dr. Debra Livingston described the most serious incident, a 14-year-old male student shot himself in view of other students at Walpole Elementary School on Feb. 10. The school district put its emergency plan into operation. School officials had to deal with a media onslaught and counseling for students. Other events detailed were a white powder incident at Mountain View Middle School in Goffstown and a man armed with a long gun within walking distance of three schools in Keene. No one was injured in those incidents.

Emergency plans and exercises to practice them are required by state law for all public and private schools in New Hampshire. For assistance with school emergency planning, contact Gregg Champlin at HSEM at 223-3629.

BRITISH OFFICIALS MEET WITH HSEM – Three members of the British Consulate-General in Boston met with HSEM staff on Sept. 24 to discuss ways to help British nationals who are injured or become involved in a disaster while living or traveling in New England. Consular officials represent the interests of their citizens abroad and can provide help such as contacting relatives or obtaining emergency passports. Approximately 700,000 visitors come from the U.K. to New England every year and another 65,000 expatriate Brits live in the region. In addition, the British Consulate-General provides services to citizens of Commonwealth or Euro-zone nations if they need help and can't reach their own consulate.

The British Consulate-General was represented by Consul-General Susie Kitchens, Vice Consul Jacqueline Greenlaw and Lynne Ashminov, Deputy Head of Political, Press & Public Affairs.

TRIPLE-E DETECTED IN NEW HAMPSHIRE - The N.H. Department of Health and Human Services announced on Sept. 20 that eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) had been detected in two emus in Fitzwilliam and a horse in Derry, prompting the department to raise the risk level for the disease in those communities from “remote” to “high.” Previously EEE had only been detected in mosquito populations this year in New Hampshire. EEE is a serious disease that carries a high mortality rate for those who contract the serious encephalitis form of the illness. Symptoms may include high fever, severe headache, stiff neck and sore throat. There is no treatment for the disease, which can lead to seizures and coma if it becomes severe. Symptoms usually occur four to 10 days after being bitten.

The threat of EEE and West Nile Virus, which is also carried by mosquitoes, will continue until the first statewide killing frost.

JUST A LITTLE SHAKIN’ GOING ON – A minor earthquake occurred in the vicinity of the Concord Airport at about 8:30 a.m. on Sept. 18. The Weston Observatory at Boston College reported that the quake was a magnitude 1.5. It was felt in Concord, Pembroke and Loudon. No damage or injuries were reported. The observatory reported that it had contacted blasting companies working in the area to confirm that they were not responsible for the tremors.

STATE PIOS CONDUCT JIC TABLETOP – Public information officers from New Hampshire state agencies participated in a Joint Information Center (JIC) tabletop exercise at the N.H. Fire Academy on Sept. 20, aimed at improving the handling of public information during a major disaster. A JIC is a unit of the Incident Command System, designed to produce consistent communications throughout a long-running incident. In addition to public information officers, it can incorporate writers, monitors for mass and social media, graphic designers and liaisons to political officials. The exercise familiarized PIOs from 10 New Hampshire state agencies with JIC operations utilizing a hurricane scenario. Representatives from the American Red Cross and the U.S. Coast Guard also participated.

STATE TO BEGIN LAKE DRAWDOWNS – The N.H. Department of Environmental Services is set to begin the annual fall drawdown of water levels on more than 50 lakes and ponds. Between Sept. 30 and Nov. 9, water levels will be reduced 1-12 feet. The drawdowns are done each fall to reduce winter ice damage to shoreline properties and to provide reserve storage capacity to reduce spring flooding. The lower water levels also give property owners the opportunity to conduct repairs or maintenance on waterfront property. The state's largest lake, Winnepesaukee, is not drawn down in the fall. But each year on Columbus Day, releases from the Lakeport Dam are reduced for up to two weeks to allow for maintenance of dams and hydropower facilities on the Winnepesaukee River.

WINDS CAUSE SCATTERED DAMAGE – Hurricane Leslie, out in the Atlantic and headed for Newfoundland, prompted warnings about rough surf and rip currents along the New England coast during the weekend of Sept. 8-9. But it was a storm approaching from the west that caused actual damage. The hurricane drove in waves of 5-8 feet along the New Hampshire coast. The rough seas were enough to attract surfers but did not cause any significant beach erosion or flooding. The second storm caused straight line winds near Pound Road in Wilmot, knocking down about 100 trees that crushed several cars. Trees were also toppled in Claremont, Londonderry, Meredith, Moultonborough and Newport. Downed trees and power lines caused an electrical fire in Littleton. No injuries were reported.

FIREFIGHTERS SUPPORT MEMORIAL STAIR CLIMB – Firefighters from around New Hampshire, family and friends honored the memory of firefighters killed in the attack on the World Trade Center by participating in the N.H. Firefighter Memorial Stair Climb on Sept. 9. They climbed the 20 floors of the Brady-Sullivan Tower five times. On their last climb, the 294 participants descended to the tenth floor and climbed the remaining 10 floors to reach 110 floors, the height of a World Trade Center tower on Sept. 11, 2001. Each climber wore a badge with a picture and a name of a firefighter who died in the collapse of the towers.

STATE POLICE CELEBRATE 75 YEARS – The N.H. Division of State Police is celebrating its diamond anniversary with an Open House/Expo on Oct. 13. It will include displays of equipment and vehicles from all specialty units, including the N.H. Marine Patrol. SWAT and K-9 units will put on live demonstrations. The event will be at State Police Headquarters, 33 Hazen Drive in Concord from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN MEETING SCHEDULED – A meeting to review the state's hazard mitigation plan will be held at HSEM on Oct. 23. This meeting will be focusing on hazard identification, vulnerability, probability and risk assessment statewide and a review of the State Hazard Mitigation actions that are in the current plan. The plan is online at: <http://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/hsem/HazardMitigation/planning.html>. Emergency managers can provide input to Beth Peck at Elizabeth.Peck@dos.nh.gov.

Keep up with emergency preparedness information in New Hampshire on www.readynh.nh.gov and [Twitter.com/ReadyNH](https://twitter.com/ReadyNH). For information on upcoming training and classes go to: <http://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/fstems/training/schedtrdates.html>